

streets dangerous and taking away jobs and looking for a free ride, you might think that immigrant-bashing is a new invention. But the mindless immigrant-bashing we hear today from the Pete Wilsons and Pat Buchanans of America is as old as the Mayflower.

Politicians have always been ready to turn real fears and legitimate concerns about crime and health care and jobs into the imaginary belief that it is all the fault of those people—those immigrants, those suspect people who are somehow different from the rest of us.

Let me read you a quote. You guess who it's about. "It is hopeless to think of civilizing these new immigrants, or keeping them in order, except by the arm of the law." Sounds a lot like the speeches I hear on the floor of the House of Representatives. Or the rhetoric any where Pat Buchanan happens to be campaigning. But the quote is a little less recent. It's from the New York Times. In 1875. And they were writing about Italians.

Well, the immigrant bashers were wrong about Italians in 1875. And they are wrong about the immigrants to America today. Unfortunately, today's immigrant bashers are so busy closing their minds that they close their eyes to the reality of immigration and the contributions of immigrants. They don't see you. They don't see this swearing in. They don't see 1,000 people ready to work and sweat and toil to make their lives better and their families lives better. You are the reality of immigration today.

I wish the bashers and politicians and fear-mongers would come to our city, and look at the reality of your faces. Maybe then, instead of closing their minds, they could open their hearts. When friends of mine who don't know Chicago come to town, like to take them to one of the most vibrant, thriving, successful commercial strips in our city. Do I take them to State Street or Michigan Avenue? No, I take them to 26th Street, one of the most successful urban commercial strips in America.

An area rebuilt almost exclusively by immigrants from Mexico. Because of immigration, 26th Street is not another declining, nearly abandoned urban wasteland. It is an example of our city at its best. And look where we are today.

At Navy Pier, a historic reminder of a Chicago that has opened its streets and ports and neighborhoods to Swedes and Poles and Irish and Lithuanians and Italians and Germans and every person from every corner of the globe and because we opened our doors instead of closing our minds we live in the greatest city in the world. And now that great city has 1,000 more recruits who will open businesses and create jobs and build housing and work and sweat and contribute and stand on the shoulders of our immigrant brothers and sisters and lead Chicago into a new century.

I ask Mr. Buchanan and every person who wants to build a wall around our nation: Have you looked at the inner-cities being rebuilt by immigrants from Mexico? Have you visited the hospitals where doctors from Asia are healing our sick? Do you care about the new businesses and new jobs and new opportunities that are being created by newcomers to America from across the world?

In the past, America's answer has been: Yes we see, yes we care, yes we understand. And that must be our answer today. A recent study estimated that immigrants to our country are earning more than \$240 billion per year. They are paying more than \$90 billion in taxes. And they are collecting only five billion dollars in welfare benefits.

Almost 20 times more taxes paid than government benefits collected. Those are the facts of our immigrant community. I am

honored and proud to serve a Congressional District that is filled with a diverse community of immigrants from throughout the world.

When I walk down Milwaukee Avenue, I still hear the languages of my neighbors from Mexico to Poland to Ukraine to Korea. Yet, no community is more American. More proud of our nation. This is the true story of the immigrant community.

I think the immigrant-bashing sweeping across our nation like a plague is a real threat to our future. Our country should remain strong and vibrant and confident. But we cannot do it if we turn our back on people who want to contribute.

What would Chicago look like today if we had closed our doors before the Irish arrived, or before the Germans arrived, before the Poles arrived? If we were to close our doors today, we will gain nothing, and lose something vital. We would become a broken city of missed opportunities. Of missed economic opportunities, the missed cultural opportunities, of missed opportunities to keep our city growing and thriving changing.

I see many faces here today that I have seen before. Your came to the workshops sponsored by the 4th Congressional District Citizenship Project. I'm very proud we were able to help you, yet I know that it was you who did the real work. You endured long lines and waits. You endured a backlog at the INS to have your application approved. Many of you studied hard for your test and worked to improve your English. I know it wasn't easy.

But the work of months will pay off today by beginning a lifetime of opportunity. Immigration is opportunity. All of you now have a greater opportunity for you to benefit from our nation. But America gets an even better deal. Our nation receives the opportunity to benefit from you.

As I speak on the floor of the House of Representatives this week, as people attack immigration and say we need fewer new American citizens, I will think of all of you today. And I will do my best to spread the word. The word of your dedication and commitment and what it means to our country. The word of how much our nation would lose if we stop having days just like today.

You've kept your end of the bargain by overcoming the obstacles and becoming citizens. I promise you, I'll do everything I can to make sure our government keeps their end of the deal.

Thank you again and congratulations to every one of you on your outstanding accomplishment.

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO LAWRENCEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. GLENN POSHARD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 29, 1996

Mr. POSHARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a special group of student-athletes from the 19th District of Illinois. The Lawrenceville High School basketball team recently completed their 1995-96 campaign by qualifying for the State tournament in Peoria. The Indians were knocked out in the elite eight, but even this loss could not tarnish such a stellar season. Highlighting their accomplishments is the fact that the team carries a 3.0-grade point average. I commend them on not only their title run, but their commitment to their studies and the excitement they brought to the community.

Lawrenceville is a senior dominated squad that has been together since middle school. As eight graders, this group won the Southern Illinois Class L State Tournament Championship with an undefeated mark of 24-0. Combined with an experienced crop of juniors and two underclassmen, it is easy to understand how the Indians competed with the best talent in the State. On the way to a 22-7 record, Lawrenceville won the Capital Classic and the North Egyptian Conference as well as regional, sectional, and super-sectional titles. Head coach Brian Stillwell and his assistants Lynn Gray, Jerry Scott, and David Heshner deserve praise for guiding this hard-working group through a long season. Significantly, Lawrenceville was the only high school in Illinois to have two sport teams qualify for their respective State tournaments, the wrestling team joining the cagers in this honor.

Mr. Speaker, high school sports teach our students many important lessons and are an excellent preparation for their future careers. In return, these fine players give back to their school and town with their uncompromising pursuit of success, both on the hardwood and in the classroom. They have done themselves proud, and I salute them. It is an honor to represent Lawrenceville in the U.S. Congress. The following are the team members: Curt Benson, Kevin Cochran, Mark Denison, Nate Ernst, Jason Goff, Ryan Gray, Stephen Muller, Matt Moorehead, Dusty Tredway, Gage Caudell, Matt Gardner, Jason Green, Josh Weger, Andy Denison, and Justin Wolfe. The managers are Josh Brown and Jared Smith.

#### HONORING THE LOWER MERION HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. JON D. FOX

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 29, 1996

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a group of student athletes who scaled the mountain of athletic success while keeping their feet firmly planted in the soil of educational excellence.

Recently, the boys basketball team from Lower Merion High School captured the class AAAA championship by beating a fine team from Erie Cathedral Prep 48 to 43. After streaking through a phenomenal season with a 31-3 record, the Aces captured their first State title since 1943.

This athletic achievement is a testament to their exceptional teamwork, commitment to excellence and their remarkable drive to achieve the finest in athletics. The hard work and dedication of Coach Gregg Downer, his staff and the fine young men paid off as they achieved the ultimate success for a high school basketball team in Pennsylvania.

These young men are shining examples of the best and brightest in America. Among the team members is Kobe Bryant whose 33 point average per game and stellar abilities have made him the No. 1 high school basketball player in the Nation.

But this high school and the outstanding Lower Merion School District of which it is a part represent more than excellence in athletics. Six of the district's nine schools have received the national Blue Ribbon designation